FEAR

THE HAUNT OF FEAR

NO.18
APRIL

REPRINT EDITION

IN THIS ISSUE:

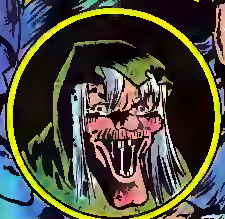
E.C.'S ADAPTATION OF A STORY BY

RAY BRADBURY

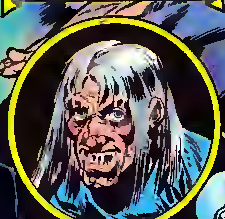
AMERICA'S TOP HORROR WRITER!

FEATURING...

THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER

PIPE DOWN
BEDTIME GORY
POT SHOT !
THE BLACK FERRIS

GHASTLY

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! SO YOU GOT YOUR *GRIMY PAWS* ON ANOTHER *INSANE ISSUE* OF MY *REEKING RAG*. WELL, HOP INTO THE *HAUNT, HORRORS*. THIS IS YOUR *HOSTESS, THE OLD WITCH*, STIRRING MY *GRUDDY CAULDRON*, BREWING ANOTHER OF MY *MORBID MEALS*. THIS *REVOLTING RECIPE* IS ONE OF MY FAVORITES. SO PLUNK DOWN ON YOUR USUAL *SHIVER-SEAT*, TUCK YOUR *DROOL CUPS* UNDER YOUR *CHATTERING CHINS*, KNOT YOUR NAPKINS AROUND YOUR *NUBBY NECKS*, AND I'LL FEED YOU THE *FOUL FARE* I CALL...

PIPE DOWN!

LILA LOOKED AT ANDREW WITH CONTEMPT. SHE HATED THE OLD MAN. THIRTEEN YEARS AGO SHE'D MARRIED HIM FOR HIS MONEY. ANDREW'D BEEN FORTY-SEVEN THEN. LILA'D BEEN TWENTY-ONE. BUT NOW, LILA WAS THIRTY-FOUR. LOVE HAD ALMOST PASSED HER BY. SHE LOOKED AT ANDREW SITTING THERE IN HIS FAVORITE CHAIR, SMOKING HIS PIPE UPSIDE-DOWN LIKE HE ALWAYS DID, READING HIS INCESSANT BOOKS OF POETRY . . AND SHE KNEW WHAT SHE HAD TO DO...

ANDREW! I'M *TIRED!* I'D LIKE TO GO TO *BED!*

HUH? BUT *LILA!* IT'S ONLY *NINE-THIRTY!* I HAVEN'T EVEN READ *HALF* THE POEMS IN THIS BOOK...

NIGHT AFTER NIGHT HE'D SAT THERE... SMOKING HIS PIPE, READING, SINKING DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO SENILITY. AND LILA'D SAT THERE WITH HIM UNTIL SHE COULD STAND IT NO LONGER.
I SAID I'M GOING TO BED NOW, ANDREW.
ALL RIGHT, DEAR. GO AHEAD! I'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
BUT ONE DAY, LILA'D MET HOWARD. HE'D COME TO THE HOUSE TO REPAIR SOMETHING THAT HAD GONE WRONG...
I'M FROM THE OIL-BURNER COMPANY, MA'AM!
OF COURSE! COME IN! FOLLOW ME...
HOWARD HAD BEEN EVERYTHING THAT LILA'D LONGED FOR THE PAST TEN YEARS... EVER SINCE THE NOVELTY OF BEING RICH HAD WORN OFF. SHE'D LED HIM DOWN INTO THE CELLAR TO THE FAULTY FURNACE, AND SHE'D WATCHED HIM REMOVE HIS SHIRT...
SOMETHIN' WRONG, MA'AM?
WHY... ER... NO! I'M SORRY..
HE'D STOOD THERE IN THE GLARE OF THE CELLAR LIGHT [illegible]... THE [illegible] RIPPLING MUSCLES...
YOU WERE STARING AT ME! IF YOU OBJECT TO MY WORKING LIKE THIS...?
OH, NO! NO, NOT AT ALL, I... I WAS JUST ADMIRING YOUR PHYSIQUE, AS A MATTER OF FACT...
HOWARD'D SHOT A GLANCE UPWARD [illegible] TO SPARE...
THAT YOUR HUSBAND UP THERE? THE OLD GEEZER?
Y... YES. HE... HE'S BEEN ILL... HE HAS A TERRIBLE CASE OF BURSITIS. HE'S PRACTICALLY A CRIPPLE...
SHE'D EDGED CLOSER TO HIM. HE LOOKED INTO HER EYES...
A SHAME... A PRETTY YOUNG WOMAN LIKE YOU... MARRIED TO AN OLD CRIPPLE. YOU OUGHT TO HAVE SOME FUN.
YES! I... OUGHT TO!
AND THEN, JUST WHEN HOWARD'D ALMOST TAKEN [illegible] INTO [illegible]...
LILA! LILA... COME UP... WILL YOU? I NEED YOU...
BLAST HIM! BLAST HIM!
"GO AHEAD," I'LL... I'LL BE AROUND! I'LL BE AROUND A LOT. THIS FURNACE IS BADLY IN NEED OF REPAIR...
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YES, LOVE HAD *ALMOST* PASSED LILA BY. BUT SHE'D REACHED OUT AND CAUGHT IT... CAUGHT IT THAT DAY IN THE CELLAR. LILA GOT UP FROM HER CHAIR AND STOOD OVER ANDREW...

ARE YOU *SURE* YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GET UP THE *STAIRS* BY *YOURSELF*, ANDREW?

OF *COURSE*, MY DEAR. JUST *LEAVE ME MY CANE*.

HOWARD HAD RETURNED... AGAIN AND AGAIN! FINALLY, BY THE FURNACE, IN THE HEAT, THEY'D PLANNED ANDREW'S MURDER...

IT'LL LOOK LIKE AN *ACCIDENT*, BABY. YOU'LL HAVE HIS *DOUGH*, AND YOU'LL BE *FREE*. IT'S THE *ONLY WAY!*

OH, HOWIE. *HOLD* ME. I'M *SO SCARED!*

LILA MOVED UP THE STAIRS. SHE OPENED THE DOOR TO HER BEDROOM. HOWARD WAS WAITING...

EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT?

YES. AS SOON AS HE'S FINISHED WITH HIS CURSED POETRY, HE'LL START UP—

THE CLOCK ON LILA'S NIGHT TABLE TICKED LOUDLY, MATCHING THE THROBBING OF HER RACING HEART. THEY STOOD IN THE DARKNESS, SHE AND HOWARD, WAITING. DOWNSTAIRS, FINALLY, THEY HEARD A RAPPING.

HE'S EMPTYING HIS PIPE. HE'LL BE COMING UP SOON.

OPEN THE DOOR A CRACK SO WE SEE...

ANDREW SIGHED, CLOSED HIS BOOK OF POETRY, AND STRUGGLED TO HIS FEET PAINFULLY. HE REACHED FOR HIS CANE, GASPING WITH EACH TORTUROUS MOVEMENT...

OOOOOH! MY BACK...

HE HOBBLED ACROSS THE LIVING ROOM AND STARTED UP THE LONG FLIGHT OF STAIRS. SLOWLY, PAINFULLY, HE CLIMBED ONE AFTER THE OTHER, STOPPING EVERY SO OFTEN TO REST. WHEN HE'D ALMOST REACHED THE TOP, LILA'S BEDROOM DOOR FLEW OPEN...

NOW!

HUH? *LILA!* AND... AND HIM...! THE FURNACE MAN...

THERE WAS A SPLIT SECOND GLEAM OF REALIZATION IN THE OLD MAN'S EYES BEFORE THEY PUSHED AND SENT HIM TUMBLING HEAD OVER HEELS DOWN THE STAIRS...

YAAAAAAAHHH...

IT WAS AN ETERNITY BEFORE ANDREW REACHED THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS. HE LAY THERE MOTIONLESS. LILA STARED DOWN AT HIM, WHIMPERING. HE MOVED. HOWIE CURSED.
HE'S NOT DEAD YET!
OOH...
HOWIE DARTED DOWN THE STEPS, KNELT BESIDE THE OLD MAN, GRABBED HIM BY HIS SHOULDERS, LIFTED HIS HEAD AND...
DIE, BLAST YOU! DIE!
HOWIE STOOD UP, BREATHING HARD. LILA WAS AT HIS SIDE, WATCHING.
ALL NIGHT. HE'S DEAD NOW. DON'T FORGET! CALL AN AMBULANCE. YOU KNOW WHAT TO SAY...
YES. YES, HUNNY! GO...
HEE, HEE. WELL, KIDDIES, THERE YOU HAVE IT. THE FIRST PART OF OUR LITTLE SNACK. ANDREW FELL FOR HOWIE AND LILA'S LITTLE PLOT... DOWN TWENTY-FIVE STEPS TO HIS INEVITABLE DEATH. THE AMBULANCE CAME, FOLLOWED BY THE POLICE, AND THE VERDICT WAS... ACCIDENTAL DEATH. LILA WAS FREE. THE NEXT THING THAT HAPPENS IN OUR TASTY TALE OF TERROR TAKES PLACE DURING LILA'S SO-CALLED PERIOD OF MOURNING. SHE WAS PASSING A PET SHOP WITH HOWIE ONE DAY, WHEN...
LOOK, HOWIE. LOOK AT THE CUTE LITTLE MONKEY. ISN'T HE DARLING? OH, I WANT HIM. I WANT HIM FOR A PET. HE'S SO CUTE...
IT'S YOUR MONEY, LILA. I CAN'T SAY NO! BUT, REALLY... A MONKEY?!
THE PET STORE MAN GAVE LILA ALL THE INSTRUCTIONS NEEDED FOR CARING FOR THE MONKEY...
EVERYTHING'S IN THIS ENVELOPE, MA'AM. WHAT HE EATS. HOW TO BATHE HIM. HIS SHOT-RECORD... REGISTRATION... BIRTH DATE...
I'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF HIM. THANK YOU. ISN'T HE A DOLL, HOWIE?
YEAH...
THAT NIGHT...
OH, LOOK, HOWIE, LOOK! HE'S GOOD LUCK... THAT'S WHAT HE IS! LOOK AT THIS. THE MONKEY WAS BORN THE SAME DAY THAT ANDREW... DIED! WHY, ALMOST TO THE MINUTE...
WHY DON'T YOU CALL HIM ANDREW AND BE DONE WITH IT!
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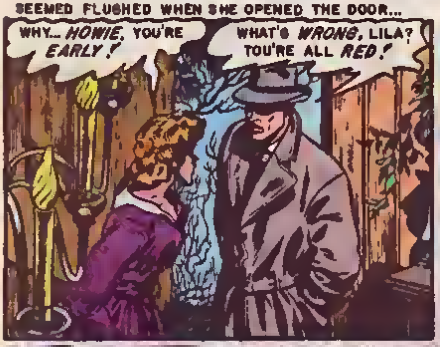
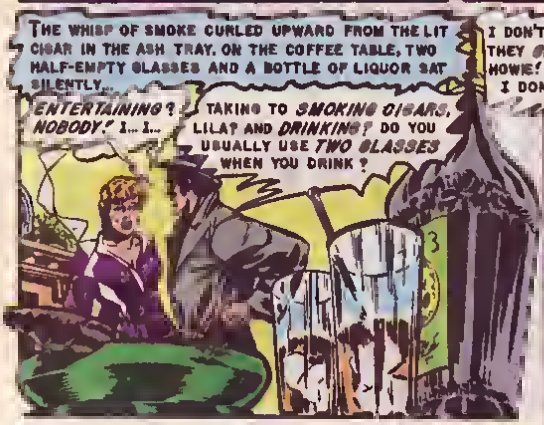
I COULON'T, HOWIE! THINK WHAT PEOPLE WOULO SAY! I'M SUPPOSEO TO BE IN MOURHING FOR ANOREW.
LOOK, LILA, IT'S BEEN FIVE MONTHS SINCE YOUR HUSBAND'S OEATH! WHEN ARE WE GOING TO BE MARRIED?
IT'S TOO SOON, HOWIE! PEOPLE WILL TALK! WE HAVE TO WAIT A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF TIME
REASOHABLE! HOW LONG IS THAT?
SOON, MY DARLING! SOON! NOW, KISS ME BOODNIGHT!
LILA, BABY
HEE, HEE! NOW FOR THE THIRD PART OF MY SLOP SERVING, KIDDIES. THE NEXT ACTION TAKES PLACE ABOUT A MONTH LATER... LILA HAD BEEN PUTTING HOWARD OFF...STALLING HIM IN HIS DEMANDS THAT THEY BE MARRIED IMMEDIATELY. SHE'D INSISTED THAT IT WAS TOO SOON AFTER ANDREW'S DEATH. THAT IT DIDN'T 'LOOK GOOD'. SO HOWIE WAITED... AND FUMED. ONE NIGHT, HE CAME TO VISIT HER. BY THAT TIME THE LITTLE MONKEY LILA'D BOUGHT HAD THE FULL RUN OF THE HOUSE...
I'M SORRY I KEPT YOU WAITING, L.. WHAT IS IT, HOWIE? WHAT'S WRONG?
THIS LILA! THIS CIGAR BUTT! I FOUNO IT IN THE ASH TRAY. WHOSE IS IT?
CIGAR BUTT? I I OON'T KNOW. IT MUST BE YOURS!
I DOH'T SMOKE CIGARS, LILA. OIO YOU FORGET? IF YOU'RE TWO-TIMING ME...
THE MONKEY, HOWIE. NE MUST HAVE BROUGHT IT IN FROM THE STREET. HOW COULD YOU THINK SUCH A THING... THAT I'O BE UNFAITHFUL?
I'M . SORRY LILA, BUT IT'S BEEN ALMOST SEVEN MONTNS SINCE ANOREW DIED. ISN T IT ABOUT TIME WE WERE MARRIED?

SEVERAL NIGHTS LATER, HOWIE CAME AGAIN TO VISIT LILA. SHE WAS LONG IN ANSWERING HIS RING. SHE SEEMED FLUSHED WHEN SHE OPENED THE DOOR...





HOWIE STARTED UP THE STAIRS...
I WAS EARLY TONIGHT, EH, LILA? YOU DIDN'T EXPECT ME! YOU THOUGHT YOU HAD TIME!
HOWIE! NO! YOU'RE WRONG!
ABOVE, LILA'S BEDROOM DOOR CLICKED SHUT. HOWIE DARTED TO IT...
LOCKED! HE'S IN THERE!
WHO, HOWIE? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
HOWIE BACKED UP FROM THE DOOR...
YOUR LOVER, LILA! YOUR LATEST SUCKER!
HOWIE!
THE DOOR SPLINTERED UNDER HOWIE'S ONSLAUGHT. IT SWUNG OPEN THE BREEZE SUCKED IN THROUGH THE OPEN BEDROOM WINDOW STIRRED THE CURTAINS...
HE GOT AWAY...OUT THE WINDOW...
THE BED WAS UNMADE AND RUFFLED. HOWIE RUSHED TO THE WINDOW AND STARED OUT INTO THE DARKNESS. THE TRELLIS OUTSIDE WAS STRONG...STRONG ENOUGH TO WITHSTAND GREAT WEIGHT. A MOVEMENT IN THE BUSHES CAUGHT HOWIE'S EYES...
THERE HE GOES...
HOWIE TORE BACK DOWN THROUGH THE HOUSE AND OUT THE REAR DOOR. HE SEARCHED THE GARDEN BUT FOUND NO ONE. THEN SOMETHING WHITE CAUGHT HOWIE'S EYE. HE PICKED IT UP...
A MAN'S HANDKERCHIEF... SMEARED WITH LIPSTICK!
LILA BACKED AWAY AS HOWIE CAME IN THE DOOR. HIS EYES BULGED...HIS FACE WAS CONTORTED... HIS LIPS WERE DRAWN BACK IN A CRUEL SNARL...
SO YOU KEPT PUTTING ME OFF AND ALL THE TIME YOU WERE CHEATING ON ME...
NO, HOWIE! IT ISN'T TRUE! I SWEAR IT..
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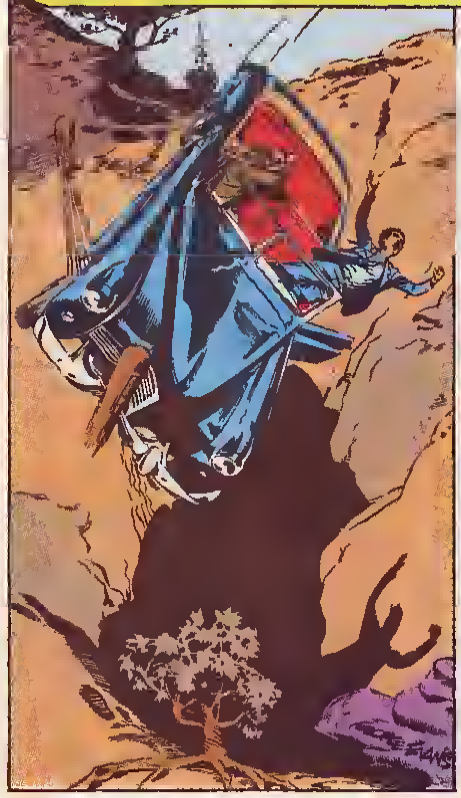
HOWIE SNATCHED THE POKER FROM THE FIRE-PLACE AS HE CAME AT LILA...
I'M GOING TO KILL YOU, LILA. KILL YOU AS YOU MADE ME KILL ANDREW...
HOWIE! NO! NO!
HOWIE SNOUGHT THE POKER DOWN WITH ALL HIS BRUTE PONCE UPON LILA'S HEAD, CUTTIHS HER SCREAM TO A BUBBLING SUNSLE...
EEEEE... G-G-G-H-H-L-G-H...
AGAIN AND AGAIN THE POKER FELL, CRUNCHING BONE, MASHING BRAINS, UNTIL, WEARILY, HOWIE FLUNG IT AT THE PULPY RED OOZE BEFORE HIM...
SOB... SOB...
THE OFFICEN PUT HIS HAND ON HOWIE'S SHOULDEN...
BETTER COME ALONG WITH ME, MISTER.
THEY WERT OUT... HOWIE SOBBING AND THE OFFICER SHAKING HIS HEAD.
THEY SENT ME AROUND TO INVESTIGATE. THE OPERATOR REPORTED SOMEBODY LIFTED THE PHONE AND SCREAMED INTO IT. SHE SAID IT SOUNDED MORE LIKE AN ANIMAL'S SCREAM THAN A HUMAN'S...
AFTER WHAT WAS LEFT OF LILA WAS SCRAPED UP FROM THE LIVING-ROOM RUG AND THE CORONER AND DETECTIVES WENT AWAY, A SMALL FURRY BROWN MONKEY SCURRIED OUT FROM THE BUSHES BEHIND THE HOUSE, SCRAMBLED BACK UP THE TRELLIS, INTO THE BEDROOM AND DOWNSTAIRS TO A CERTAIN CHAIR. THERE IT CURLED UP WITH A PIPE, UPSIDE-DOWN, IN ITS MOUTH AND A BOOK OF POETRY ON ITS LAP. AND IT SEEMED TO BE SMILING...
HEE, HEE! BELIEVE IN REINCARNATION, FIENDS? DO YOU KNOW THAT IN TIBET, THE HIGH LAMA'S SUCCESSOR IS CHOSEN BY SEARCHING FOR AN INFANT BORN AT THE EXACT MOMENT THAT THE OLD HIGH LAMA DIES? AFRICAN TRIBES BELIEVE THAT THE SPIRIT, UPON DEATH, LEAVES THE BODY AND ENTERS THAT OF AN ANIMAL'S BEING BORN AT THE SAME MOMENT. SO, HOWIE AND LILA MADE A MONKEY OUT OF ANDREW. BUT HE GOT EVEN... DIDN'T HE? OF COURSE LILA WAS INNOCENT OF BEING UNFAITHFUL... TO HOWIE THAT IS HOWIE JUST FELL FOR SOME MONKEY BUSINESS. AND NOW THE VAULT-KEEPER AWAITS WITH HIS MONKEY SHINES. BYE. NOW.

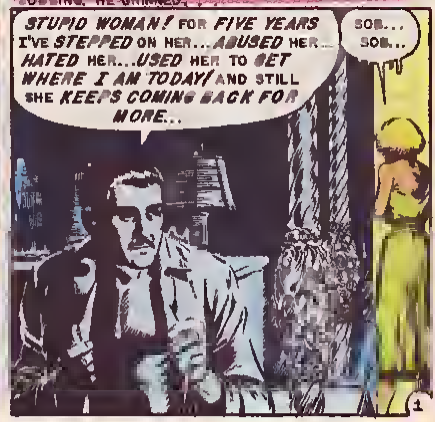
THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! AND NOW IT'S YOUR *VAULT-KEEPER'S* TURN TO *CURDLE YOUR BLOOD*, SO COME INTO *THE VAULT OF HORROR* FIENDS, SIT DOWN BESIDE ME AND I'LL NARRATE ANOTHER *NAUSEATING NOVELETTE* FROM MY *CRAWLY COLLECTION*. THIS LITTLE *YELP-YARN* COMES TO YOU THROUGH THE COURTESY OF *NIGHTMARE MATTRESSES*, INC....MAKERS OF THE MATTRESS THAT *SQUELCHES SCREAMS* AND LETS YOU *SNORE* WITH *GORE*. I *CALL* THIS *SPINE-TINGLER*...

BEDTIME GORY!



MILTON UNDRESSED SLOWLY, HUMMING TO HIMSELF. HE SLID INTO HIS PAJAMAS AND SAT DOWN ON THE FIRM MATTRESS OF THE FOUR-POSTER BED. HE STUDIED THE BED'S DELICATE CARVINGS, ITS GLEAMING FINISH. IN THE NEXT ROOM HE COULD HEAR LORNA'S GENTLE SOBBING. HE GRINNED.



MILTON LAY BACK AMONG THE SOFT FOLDS OF THE FOUR-POSTER'S BEDDING. HE CHUCKLED...

TOMORROW, I'LL HAVE EVERYTHING! TOMORROW, I'LL BE RUNNING THE WHOLE SHOW. I ALWAYS SAID I'D BE A BIG MAN SOMEDAY! TOMORROW IS THE DAY...

SOB... SOB...

LORNA'S SOBBING FROM THE NEXT ROOM STOPPED. MILTON CLOSED HIS EYES. YES, TOMORROW... TOMORROW WAS THE DAY. MILTON DOZED. IT WAS A COMFORTABLE BED AT THAT. LORNA'D GIVEN IT TO HIM. STUPID LORNA. FIVE YEARS HE'D USED HER. NOW, HE WAS THROUGH. TOMORROW... TOMORROW... MILTON WAS ASLEEP...

MILTON? MILTON? ARE YOU AWAKE?

LORNA PEERED AT HIM WITH RED, TEAR-FILLED EYES. SHE GLIDED ACROSS THE ROOM...

YOU'RE ASLEEP, AREN'T YOU, MILTON? SOUND ASLEEP! NOTHING BOTHERS YOU, DOES IT? NO CONSCIENCE! NO REGRETS, SOUND ASLEEP! WAITING! WAITING FOR TOMORROW...

YOU'LL GET WHAT YOU WANTED TOMORROW, MILTON. WHAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED. YOU'LL BE THAT BIG MAN YOU ALWAYS SAID YOU'D BE. THEY'RE GOING TO ELECT YOU PRESIDENT OF THE COMPANY TOMORROW. PRESIDENT...

LORNA REACHED OUT AND TOOK MILTON'S LIMP HAND. SHE STARED AT IT...

REMEMBER WHEN WE MET, MILTON? YOU CAME TO WORK FOR US... AS OUR CHAUFFEUR! YOU WERE YOUNG... HANDSOME... AMBITIOUS! AND I WAS SO BLIND...

"WE WERE WORLDS APART. I WAS THE DAUGHTER OF A RICH MAN, AND YOU... YOU WERE HIS SERVANT. BUT THAT DIDN'T STOP YOU, DID IT? YOU... YOU MADE LOVE TO ME... PROPOSED TO ME...'

OH, MILTON, DARLING! I'D MARRY YOU... IF I COULD! BUT YOU KNOW FATHER WOULDN'T GIVE HIS APPROVAL!

WE COULD ELOPE... GET MARRIED SECRETLY! THEN, AFTER I'VE PROVEN MY WORTH TO YOUR FATHER, WE COULD TELL HIM...

"I DIDN'T KNOW THEN. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT YOU REALLY WANTED. I WAS BLINDED BY MY LOVE FOR YOU. WE DROVE UPSTATE AND FOUND A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE...'

...I PRONOUNCE YOU MAN AND WIFE!

LORNA, DARLING!

OH, MILTON...

'We were secretly married. Father never knew. He was killed before we could tell him. Remember the accident, Milton? You drove him into town that day. You said the brakes failed on the cliff road...'

I can't stop her. The brakes...

We're going to crash...

'You were thrown clear of the wreck, but Father was trapped. He died instantly...'

'And suddenly, everything that Father owned was mine... mine and my husband's... mine and yours, Milton...'

This is the break I've needed, Lorna. All my life I've been a nobody! This is my chance.

Milton. How can you talk like that with Father not even cold in his grave.

'You took over, didn't you, Milton. My father's holdings...his stock in the company... you took complete charge...'

I'm going to be a big man someday, Lorna. Just wait and see!

Oh, Milton... sos...

'Father had been a minor stockholder in the company but that wasn't enough for you, was it? You weren't satisfied with that. You wanted it all. The whole thing. You hired detectives...'

He has a list of all the stockholders. I want you to investigate every one of them, understand? I want you to get something on each of them.

We understand, sir!

'You started your campaign... your campaign to gain control. It was dirty. Your hirelings dug deep, wallowing in the filth, bringing it to you...'

He's married... with a family, sir! Very respected. But he's having an affair on the side. He's got a chorus girl...

Good work! But this only gives me 42 %! I'll need more. Keep at it!

'You went to see your first victim. It was so easy.'

No! No! My reputation! I'll be ruined. You can't do this. Please. I'll pay you... anything!

You hold some stock in a certain company! I want it! Sell it to me and I'll remain silent, Mr. Cutler!

'WHAT COULD HE DO? HE WAS TRAPPED! YOU CLIMBED THE *FINST* RUNG YOWARD THE TOP. HE TURNED OVEN HIS STOCK YO YOU AHD YOU PAID HIM. PAID NIM WITH MY DEAD FATHEN'S MOHEY...'

HOW COULD YOU *OO* IT, MILTON? IT WAS SO *UNFAIN.* SO *CNEAP!*

I GET WHAT I *WANT,* LONHA! I GET IT AHY WAY I *CAN!*

'AHD THE DIRT CAME IN. REMEMBER THE *SECONO* ONE? HE HELD LESS THAN 4% OF THE VOTINO STOCK. A MERE PITTANCE. BUT YOU WANTED IT. NOTHING WOULD STOP YOU, WOULD IT MILTOH?'

H-HOW OID YOU *FINO OUT?* IT.. IT WAS SO *LONG* AGO!

I HAVE *WAYS,* MR. FORBES! IT WOULD MEAN *JAIL* FON YOU, IF I *TOLD.* NOW, YOU OWN SOME *SHANES OF STOCK..*

'YOU CLIMBED UPWAND, DIDN'T YOU, MILTON? THE SECOND NUHO. 46%! YOU HEEDED 51%. YOU STEPPED ON THEM AHD CLIMBED. NOW I *PITIED* THE *THINO* ONE...'

BAM! BAM!

J.D. STAL

HE *KILLED* NIM-*SELF,* MILTON! HE *COMMITTED SUICIOE!*

HIS *WIDOW* WILL OO BUSINESS! SHE'LL *NAVE* TO!

'SO YOU WEHT TO SEE HEN...'

PLEASE! DON'T TELL THE *NEWSPAPERS.* I.. *COULON'T FACE MY FNIENOS...*SOB.. *MY FAMILY!*

THEN SELL ME THE *STOCK,* MNS. STALEY. THAT'S ALL I *WANT!*

'5%! YOU GOT THREE PERCENT FROM MN. STALEY'S WIDOW YOU WERE STILL SHORT. YOU STILL NEEDED TWO PERCENT. AND YOU WERE DETERMINED TO GET IT.'

YOU'VE GOT YO *STOP* THIS, MILTON! YOU'VE *GOT TO..*

MIND YOUR OWN *BUSINESS,* LORNA. I *KNOW* WHAT I'M DOING...

'AND THEN YOU FOUND YOUN *FOUNTH* VICTIM. YOUN PNIVATE GARBAGE PICKERS CAME WITH THEIN DIRT, AND YOU RUBBED YOUR HANDS IN IT...'

ALL NIGHT! ALL RIGHT! HERE'S YOUN STOCK! NOW *GET OUT,* YOU *DIRTY BLACKMAILEN!*

NOT BLACKMAIL AT *ALL,* MR BURKHER I'M *BUYING* THESE SHARES. REMEMBER THAT! HERE'S YOUR CHECK!

'So now you had it, Milton. You had your control! And at the next stockholders meeting, you exploded your bomb...'
It's as simple as that, gentlemen. I have 52% of the voting stock! I demand the presidency!
'I remember how fiendishly gleeful you were, Milton. And even though I loved you, I hated you for what you'd done to all those people...'
I said I'd be a big man, and now I'm going to be! Next week, they're going to elect me president of the company!
And your dream has finally been fulfilled, eh, Milton?
That's right! I was smart! I stepped over the dead wood. I got to the top where I belong!
Where would you be if you hadn't married me? If father hadn't been killed?
I'd have gotten there anyway, Lorna. Whatever I did, I did with a plan. Why do you think I married you?
Because you loved me... and I loved you...
Hah! Don't make me laugh! Because your old man had dough! And he had that stock!
You knew about it... the stock!
I came to work for him because of it! Once I worked for the company... as a truck driver! I was fired! I swore I'd own it someday!
Then you lied to me. You never loved me! I was a step on your ladder!
Exactly! And father! He... he would have disowned me if he'd found out I'd married you! But he never got that chance. You... you killed him, didn't you?

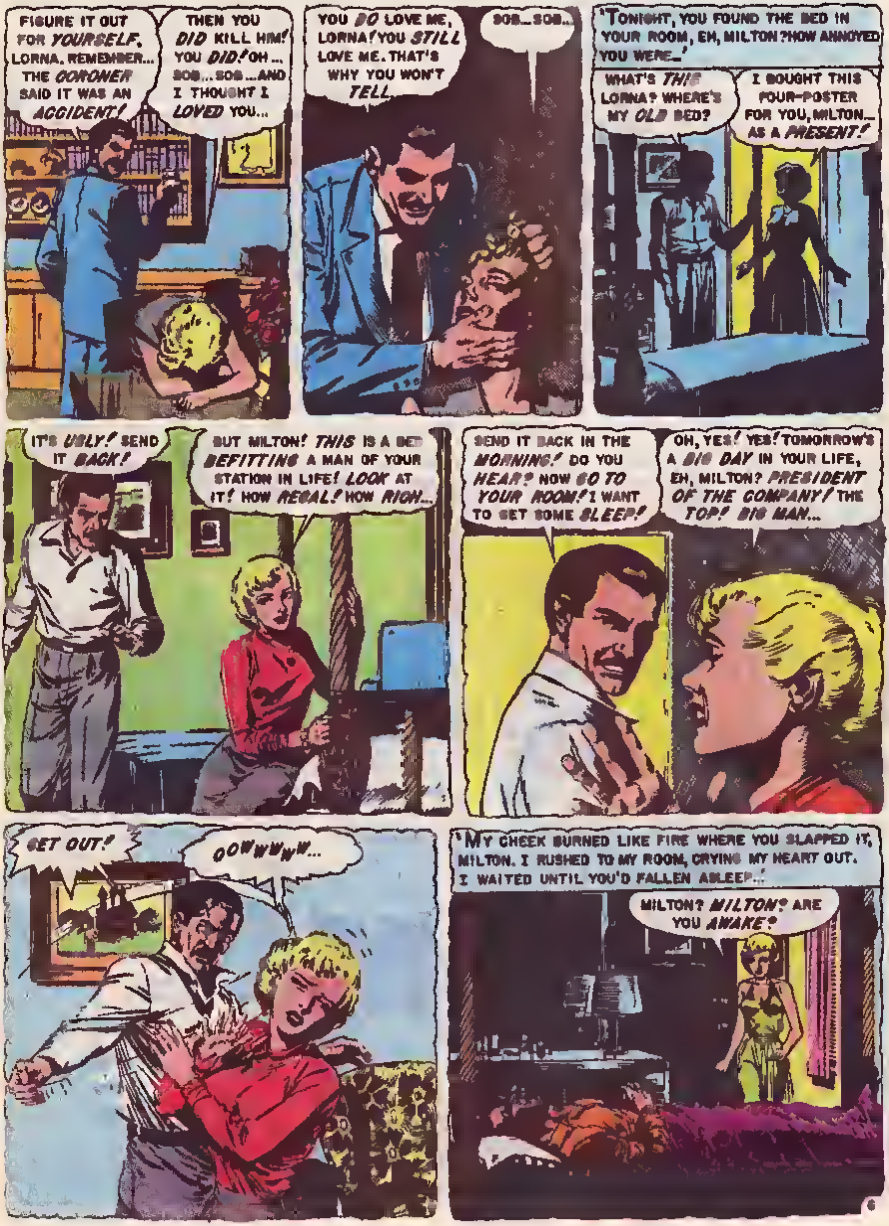


FIGURE IT OUT FOR YOURSELF, LORNA. REMEMBER... THE CORONER SAID IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
THEN YOU DID KILL HIM! YOU DID! OH... SOB... SOB... AND I THOUGHT I LOVED YOU...
YOU DO LOVE ME, LORNA! YOU STILL LOVE ME. THAT'S WHY YOU WON'T TELL.
SOB... SOB...
"TONIGHT, YOU FOUND THE BED IN YOUR ROOM, EH, MILTON? HOW ANNOYED YOU WERE..."
WHAT'S THIS LORNA? WHERE'S MY OLD BED?
I BOUGHT THIS FOUR-POSTER FOR YOU, MILTON... AS A PRESENT!
IT'S UGLY! SEND IT BACK!
BUT MILTON! THIS IS A BED BEFITTING A MAN OF YOUR STATION IN LIFE! LOOK AT IT! HOW REGAL! HOW RICH...
SEND IT BACK IN THE MORNING! DO YOU HEAR? NOW GO TO YOUR ROOM! I WANT TO GET SOME SLEEP!
OH, YES! YES! TOMORROW'S A BIG DAY IN YOUR LIFE, EH, MILTON? PRESIDENT OF THE COMPANY! THE TOP! BIG MAN...
GET OUT!
OOWWWW...
"MY CHEEK BURNED LIKE FIRE WHERE YOU SLAPPED IT, MILTON. I RUSHED TO MY ROOM, CRYING MY HEART OUT. I WAITED UNTIL YOU'D FALLEN ASLEEP..."
MILTON? MILTON? ARE YOU AWAKE?

MILTON OPENED HIS EYES. LORNA STOOD OVER HIM...

LORNA! I...I... I'M TIED UP! WHAT IS THIS?

IT'S JUST PAST MIDNIGHT, MILTON! TODAY'S THE DAY!

MILTON LAY SPREAD-EAGLED ACROSS THE FOUR-POSTER, HIS WRISTS AND ANKLES EACH SECURELY BOUND TO A POST.

LORNA! UNTIE ME! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

YOU ALWAYS SAID YOU'D BE A BIG MAN SOMEDAY, MILTON! SO I'M GOING TO HELP YOU...

LORNA BEGAN TO TURN A CRANK. SOMEWHERE INSIDE THE BED, A RATCHET CLICKED...

LORNA! FOR GOD'S SAKE...

YOU'RE GOING TO BE A BIG MAN, MILTON!

MILTON FELT HIS ARMS PULLED...HIS LEGS DRAWN..

LORNA! YOU'RE MAD! STOP! STOP!

BIG MAN... EH...EH...

TICKA TICKA TICKA

AND THEN, MILTON FELT THE TENDONS TEARING, THE MUSCLES SNAPPING, THE VEINS AND ARTERIES BURSTING AND HEMORRHAGING. HE SCREAMED. HE KNEW. THE RATCHET CLICKED AS LORNA TURNED THE CRANK...

IT'S...A STRETCH RACK!

BIG...EH...EH...MAN...

MILT

TICKA TICKA

HEH, HEH! THAT'S MY STORY, CHUMS. MILTY YELLED 'UNCLE' THAT NIGHT, BUT LORNA KEPT 'DOOMING' IT...TURNING THE CRANK, THAT IS! MILTY SURE WAS A BIG MAN WHEN THEY FOUND HIM IN THE MORNING. HE WAS SPREAD FROM PILLOW TO POST. FOUR POSTS, OF COURSE! SOME WISE GUY HAD A TAPE MEASURE WITH HIM AND TOOK A READING. ANYBODY WANT TO BUY A TWELVE FOOT LONG MAJORITY STOCKHOLDER? NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO THAT BAG, THIS OLD NAG, BEFORE SHE STARTS TO NAG SEE YOU NEXT IN THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S RAG! 'BYE, NOW!

Through the heavily matted undergrowth be could see the clearing where the line of gnarled trees ended and the desolate swamp stretched off toward the murky horizon. The light was already beginning to fail; they would be after him with the bloodhounds in another few moments, as soon as they discovered he was missing from the prison lineup.

He had heard often, ftom other convicts, that the swamp was probahly the only way to escape from the penitentiary . . . but none of the men actually *knew* of anyone who HAD gotten clear of the pursuing guards by taking to the swamp. *Still,* he thought to himself, his chest heaving ftom the exertion of scaling the prison wall and crouching and scrambling his way to the edge of the forest, *continuing on through the woods is just what the guards would WANT me to do! THAT way their hounds could track me down 'til I dropped from exhaustion!*

He heard a crashing in the undergrowth behind him, saw sudden shafts of light penetrating the low hanging branches in long searching arcs. They were close behind him now; he had only a moment in which to make his decision!

With a nervous glance behind him, he ducked low under the last fringe of branches and stepped uneasily into the ooze of the swamp. Step by step, his breath wheezing through his nostrils in frightened little dribbles, he moved out into the clinging mud. Step by step . . . the mud creeping up past his knees to his bips . . . he stumbled away from the forest into the inky darkness.

A finger of blue-white probed toward him. Without a moment's hesitation he scrunched low, aware of the thick goo pressing against his chest and trickling against bis throat. He crouched breathlessly, his chin buried in the muck, while the insistent light searched the swamp for him. Then the glare disappeared. He was shrouded again in darkness.

He permitted himself an audible sigh of relief. The guards were moving past the spot where he bid. Another few minutes buried here in the swamp and he'd be able to straighten up and creep out of the muck and back to the forest. Just a few more minutes . . . he'd allow himself *five* more minutes and he'd make his move!

* * * * *

The tall boney-faced guard flicked the switch and his flashlight went out. The two uniformed men stood together in the forest, peering out across the desolate swamp, while their dogs sniffed and scrabbled in among the leaves oo the ground.

The stocky guard slipped his pistol back into its holster and pulled his collar up closer to his chin. He turned away from the swamp and ducked back into the forest.

"I mld you he'd never head for the swamp," he said over his shoulder, as he snapped the leash holding his brace of bloodhounds. "Let's keep going through the woods!"

"Yep!" answered the taller guard, as he flicked on the ligbt again . . . pointed, now, ahead through the trees. "Guess you're right! He's probably too smart to set foot in that swamp and wait for us to pass him by. Cause even if we DID miss him, be'd be sucked down into that stuff the very first time he tried to move out of that *quicksand!* It's happened m every escaped con wbo ever tried to make his getaway through the mud!"

THE OLD WITCH'S GRIM FAIRY TALE!

WELL, HERE'S ANOTHER *NAUSEATING NURSERY NARRATION*, NUTS! A *TERROR TALE* FOR *TEEHY TYKES*. A *CHILDISH CHILLER*. I CALL IT...

POT-SHOT!

ONCE UPON A TIME... LONG, LONG AGO... THERE LIVED A VERY WEALTHY FRENCH NOBLEMAN NAMED IRVING, DUKE OF MELVANIA. NOW THIS RICH DUKE HAD A SON NAMED AMBOY. AMBOY WAS IN HIS TWENTIES AND VERY SPOILED...

FATHER, I'M TAKING THE *COACH!* I HAVE A *HEAVY DATE* WITH A *FRENCH WENCH!*

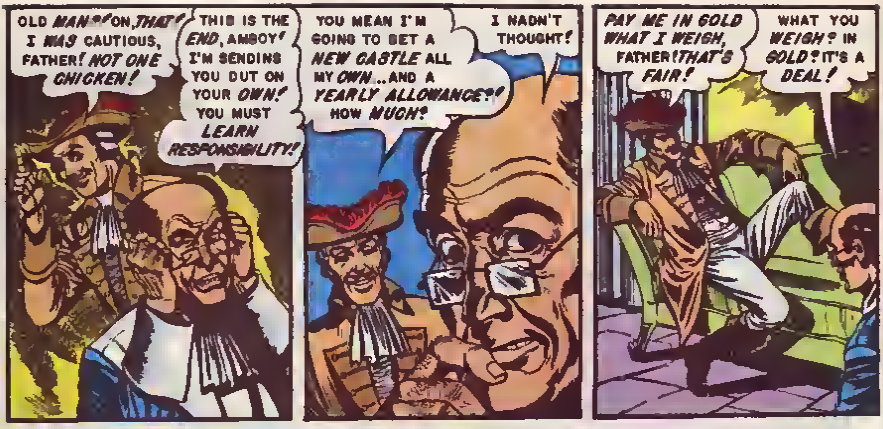
ALL RIGHT, AMBOY BUT DO DRIVE *SLOWLY* THROUGH TOWN TONIGHT! *LAST* NIGHT YOU *KILLED TWO CHICKENS* AND A *PEASANT CHILD*.

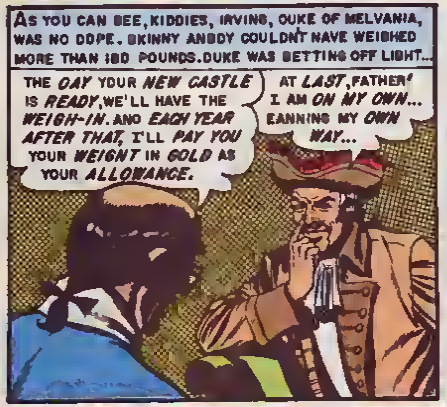
... AND YOU *KNOW* HOW FOND I AM OF *CHICKEN!*

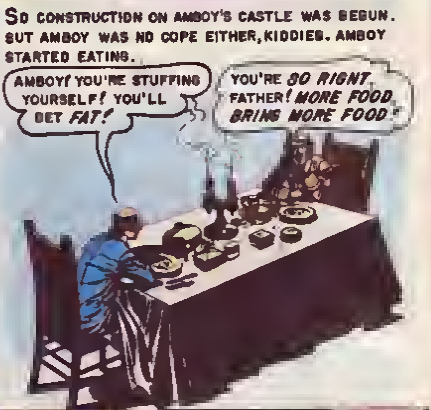
AND YOU *KNOW* HOW FOND *I* AM OF *HIGH SPEED*, FATHER. *NOTHING THRILLS ME* AS MUCH AS *WHIPPING THE TEAM*... THE *ROAD RUSHING* MADLY BENEATH THE *WHEELS*... THE *WIND, WHISTLING* IN MY *EARS*... AND *ME WHISTLING* AT A *FRENCH WENCH*...

ESPECIALLY FRIED CHICKEN! SOUTHERN FRIED CHICKEN! SOUTH-ERR FRANCE, THAT IS...
GOOD NIGHT, FATHER. I AM OFF.. TO MONKEY WITH MY WENCH...
CAUTIOUS, NOW!
FATHER! I KNOW THE FACTS OF LIFE..
DRIVING, I MEAN!
HUH? OR! YES, FATHER, I WILL DRIVE WITH GREAT CAUTION! AT TREMENDOUS SPEED, OF COURSE.. BUT WITH GREAT CAUTION...
OH, AMBOY. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DO WITH YOU. YOU'RE SO...SO WILD! SO... SO IRRESPONSIBLE...
GIVE ME A YEARLY ALLOWANCE, A NICE NEW CASTLE, AND I'LL BE ON MY OWN.. I'LL ACCEPT RESPON-SIBILITIES!
AMBOY, DUKE'S SON, WAS GONE WITH THE WIND. SOON HIS COACH WAS SCREAMING DOWN THE CASTLE ROAD. AND HE WAS HIS COACHMAN ON.
FASTER, YOU FOOL, YOU! FASTER! FASTER! HERE! GIVE ME THAT WHIP!
THE HORSES ARE WIDE-OPEN, NOW, SIR!
ON...ON DOWN TOWARD TOWN, AMBOY'S COACH THUNDERED, THE HORSES SNORTING AND PERSPIRING... AMBOY'S WHIP LASHING OUT...
WE'RE COMING INTO TOWN NOW, SIR. DON'T YOU THINK YOU OUGHT TO SLOW DOWN?
SLOW DOWN?! THIS IS WHERE THE FUN BEGINS!
SUDDENLY, THE COBBLESTONES OF THE TOWN'S MAIN STREET SWEPT UNDER THE HURTLING CARRIAGE WHEELS AND THE CLATTER ECHOED INTO THE NIGHT...
IT'S AMBOY..
THE DUKE'S SON...
OFF THE STREETS!

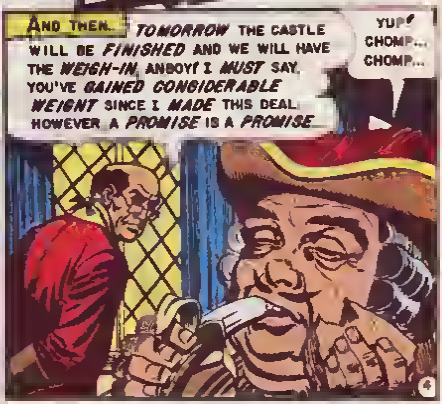
THE TOWNSPEOPLE SCATTERED IN ALL DIRECTIONS AS THE COACH ROARED INTO THE MARKET SQUARE...
LOOK OUT!
OLD PIERRE!
HE'S IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET!
OLD PIERRE COULD NOT MOVE. HE WAS ROOTED WITH FEAR. THE COACH BORE DOWN UPON HIM...
EEEEEEEAAAAAAAHHH!
THE COACH RUMBLED OFF INTO THE NIGHT. A TWISTED BROKEN BODY LAY IN AN EVER-WIDENING POOL OF BLOOD ON THE COBBLESTONES...
OLD PIERRE!
HE'S...
DEAD!
THE TOWNSFOLK STOOD ABOUT IN THE MARKETPLACE, CURSING...
THE DIRTY @#X?!!
SOMETHING SHOULD BE DONE ABOUT THIS.
AMBOY'S RECKLESS DRIVING SHOULD BE STOPPED!
LATE THAT NIGHT, AMBOY RETURNED TO THE CASTLE. THE DUKE WAS WAITING FOR HIM...
WHY, FATHER! YOU'RE STILL UP! YOU...LOOK ANGRY!
I AM, BOY! I HEARD ABOUT YOUR SOJOURN INTO TOWN TONIGHT!
I.. I LOST MY HEAD, FATHER!
YOU PROMISED YOU'D BE CAUTIOUS!
I COULDN'T HELP IT! SHE...
SHE?! I'M TALKING ABOUT THE OLD MAN YOU KILLED!
3


OLD MAN ON, THAT! I WAS CAUTIOUS, FATHER! NOT ONE CHICKEN!
THIS IS THE END, AMBOY! I'M SENDING YOU OUT ON YOUR OWN! YOU MUST LEARN RESPONSIBILITY!
YOU MEAN I'M GOING TO BET A NEW CASTLE ALL MY OWN... AND A YEARLY ALLOWANCE?! HOW MUCH?
I HADN'T THOUGHT!
PAY ME IN GOLD WHAT I WEIGH, FATHER! THAT'S FAIR!
WHAT YOU WEIGH? IN GOLD? IT'S A DEAL!

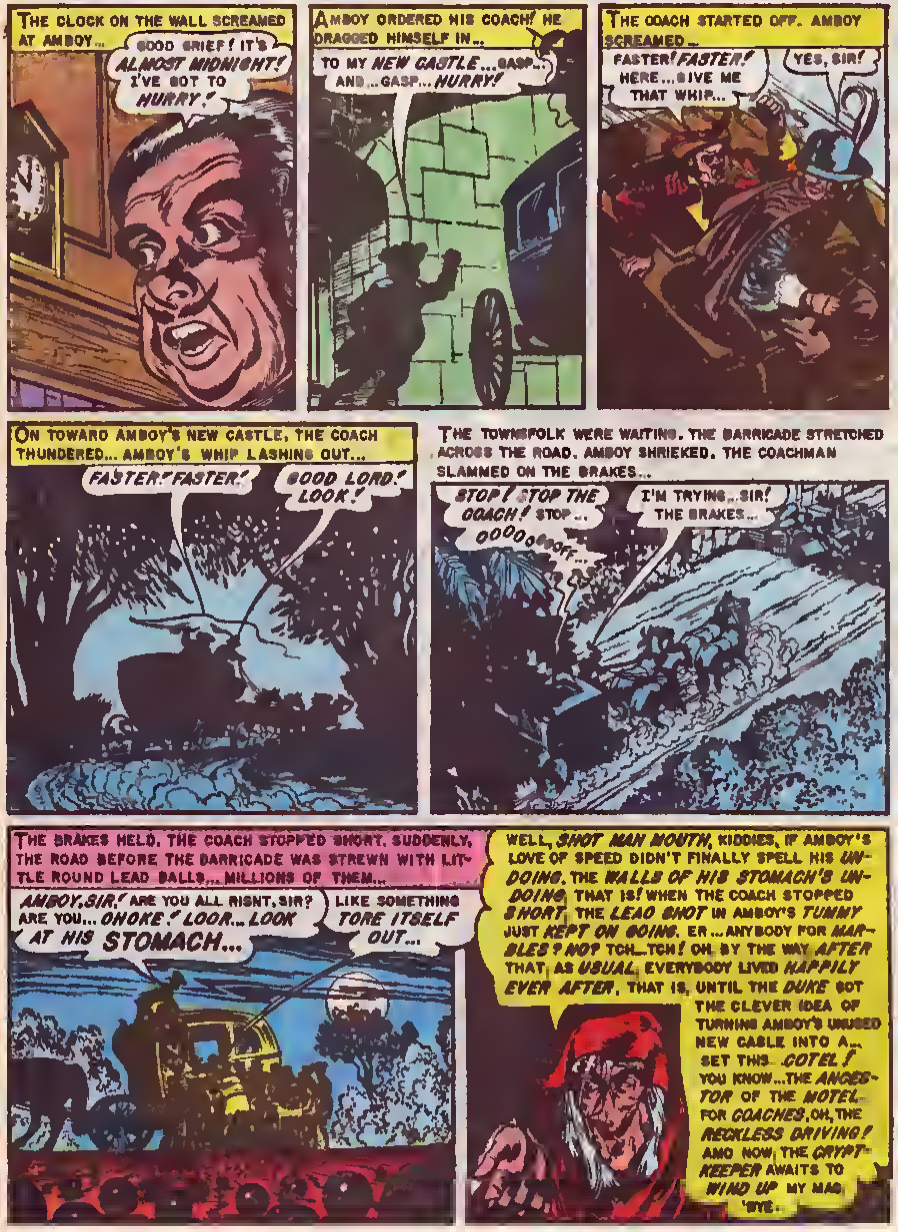

AS YOU CAN SEE, KIDDIES, IRVING, DUKE OF MELVANIA, WAS NO DOPE. SKINNY AMBOY COULDN'T HAVE WEIGHED MORE THAN 180 POUNDS. DUKE WAS GETTING OFF LIGHT...
THE DAY YOUR NEW CASTLE IS READY, WE'LL HAVE THE WEIGH-IN. AND EACH YEAR AFTER THAT, I'LL PAY YOU YOUR WEIGHT IN GOLD AS YOUR ALLOWANCE.
AT LAST, FATHER! I AM ON MY OWN... EARNING MY OWN WAY...


SO CONSTRUCTION ON AMBOY'S CASTLE WAS BEGUN. BUT AMBOY WAS NO DOPE EITHER, KIDDIES. AMBOY STARTED EATING.
AMBOY! YOU'RE STUFFING YOURSELF! YOU'LL GET FAT!
YOU'RE SO RIGHT, FATHER! MORE FOOD, BRING MORE FOOD!

AND AS THE MONTHS WENT BY, AMBOY GOT FATTER AND FATTER AND FATTER. AND AMBOY'S CASTLE NEARED COMPLETION...
IT'S ALMOST DONE, AMBOY!
YUP! CHOMP... CHOMP...


AND THEN... TOMORROW THE CASTLE WILL BE FINISHED AND WE WILL HAVE THE WEIGH-IN, AMBOY! I MUST SAY, YOU'VE GAINED CONSIDERABLE WEIGHT SINCE I MADE THIS DEAL. HOWEVER A PROMISE IS A PROMISE...
YUP! CHOMP... CHOMP...

THE NEXT DAY...
COME, AMBOY! THE SCALE IS SET UP IN YOUR NEW CASTLE'S COURTYARD. LET'S GO!
YOU GO... CHOMP... FATHER, I'LL MEET YOU! DON'T FORGET! I HAVE TILL MIDNIGHT!
GO AHEAD, AMBOY! EAT ALL YOU WANT. THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE! TILL MIDNIGHT— THEN...
CHOMP CHOMP...
AS SOON AS THE DUKE WAS GONE, AMBOY WADDLED TO A SCALE...
ONLY TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY POUNDS! NOT ENOUGH! WHAT COULD I EAT TO MAKE ME HEAVIER...
SUDDENLY AMBOY'S GLANCE FELL UPON THE LEAD WEIGHTS ON THE OTHER SCALE-BALANCE...
OF COURSE. LEAD. IF I COULD FILL MYSELF UP WITH ENOUGH LEAD I COULD ADD ANOTHER HUNDRED POUNDS, EASILY! BUT, HOW...
AMBOY POINTED TO THE FLINTLOCK PISTOL HANGING OVER THE MANTLE...
OF COURSE! LEAD SHOT! LITTLE ROUND LEAD BALLS WOULD BE EASY TO SWALLOW!
THE REST OF THE DAY, AMBOY SPENT SWALLOWING THE CASTLE'S SUPPLY OF PISTOL SHOT! HE EMPTIED TWO WHOLE KEGS...
GULP... GULP... GULP... OH, I'M FULL! BUT... GULP...
FINALLY..
I CAN'T SWALLOW ANY MORE. I CAN HARDLY MOVE. I MUST WEIGH FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS. AND— AND...
5

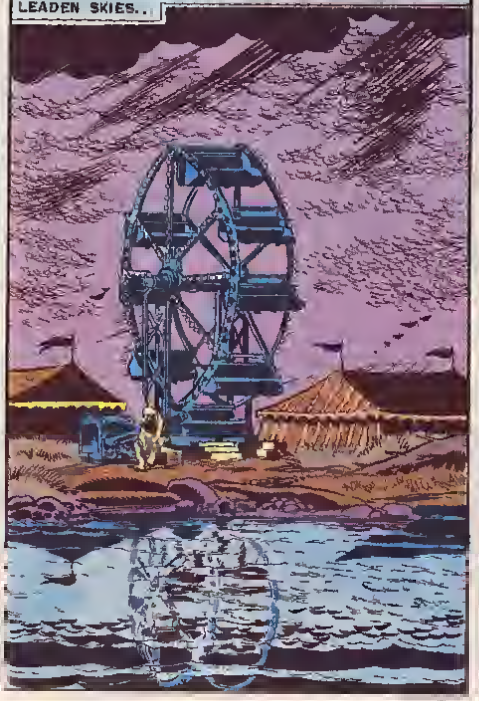

THE CLOCK ON THE WALL SCREAMED AT AMBOY...
GOOD GRIEF! IT'S ALMOST MIDNIGHT! I'VE GOT TO HURRY!
AMBOY ORDERED HIS COACH! HE DRAGGED HIMSELF IN...
TO MY NEW CASTLE... GASP... AND... GASP... HURRY!
THE COACH STARTED OFF. AMBOY SCREAMED...
FASTER! FASTER! HERE... GIVE ME THAT WHIP...
YES, SIR!
ON TOWARD AMBOY'S NEW CASTLE, THE COACH THUNDERED... AMBOY'S WHIP LASHING OUT...
FASTER! FASTER!
GOOD LORD! LOOK!
THE TOWNSFOLK WERE WAITING. THE BARRICADE STRETCHED ACROSS THE ROAD. AMBOY SHRIEKED. THE COACHMAN SLAMMED ON THE BRAKES...
STOP! STOP THE COACH! STOP...
I'M TRYING... SIR! THE BRAKES...
OOOOoooh...
THE BRAKES HELD. THE COACH STOPPED SHORT. SUDDENLY, THE ROAD BEFORE THE BARRICADE WAS STREWN WITH LITTLE ROUND LEAD BALLS... MILLIONS OF THEM...
AMBOY, SIR! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SIR? ARE YOU... OH NO! LOOK... LOOK AT HIS STOMACH...
LIKE SOMETHING TORE ITSELF OUT...
WELL, SHOT MAN MOUTH, KIDDIES, IF AMBOY'S LOVE OF SPEED DIDN'T FINALLY SPELL HIS UNDOING, THAT IS! WHEN THE COACH STOPPED SHORT, THE LEAD SHOT IN AMBOY'S TUMMY JUST KEPT ON GOING. ER... ANYBODY FOR MARBLES? NOT TCH...TCH! OH, BY THE WAY AFTER THAT, AS USUAL, EVERYBODY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER. THAT IS, UNTIL THE DUKE GOT THE CLEVER IDEA OF TURNING AMBOY'S UNUSED NEW CASTLE INTO A... SET THIS... COTEL! YOU KNOW... THE ANCESTOR OF THE MOTEL... FOR COACHES. OH, THE RECKLESS DRIVING! AMO NOW, THE CRYPT-KEEPER AWAITS TO WIND UP MY MAG. 'BYE.

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! SO, NOW IT'S THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S TURN TO CHILL YOU. FOR THE WIND-UP SPOT TO O.W.'S MAG, I'VE CHOSEN A TALE BY *RAY BRADBURY*. SO COME INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR, SIT DOWN OR THAT TENT-SPIKE THERE, AND I'LL TELL YOU MY ADAPTATION OF MR BRADBURY'S...

THE BLACK FERRIS!

THE CARNIVAL HAD COME TO TOWN LIKE AN OCTOBER WIND, LIKE A DARK BAT FLYING OVER A COLD LAKE, BONES RATTLING IN THE NIGHT, MOURNING, SIGHING, WHISPERING UP THE TENTS IN THE DARK RAIN. IT STAYED ON FOR A MONTH BY THE GREY, RESTLESS LAKE OF OCTOBER, IN THE BLACK WEATHER AND INCREASING STORMS AND LEADEN SKIES..



DURING THE THIRD WEEK, AT TWILIGHT ON A THURSDAY, TWO SMALL BOYS WALKED ALONG THE LAKE SHORE IN THE COLD WIND...

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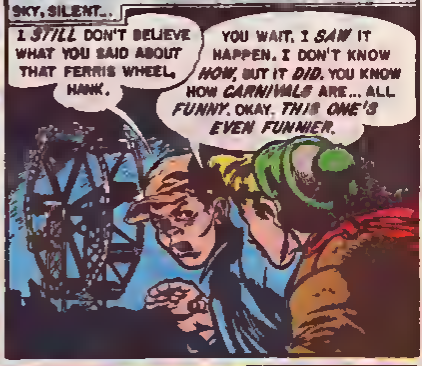
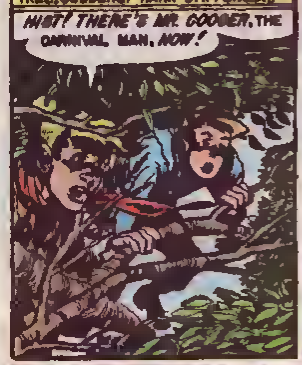
PETER AND HENRY RAN TO THE LONELY CARNIVAL GROUNDS. THE MIDWAY WAS SILENT. THE GREY TENTS HISSED IN THE WIND LIKE GIANT PREHISTORIC WINGS. AT EIGHT O'CLOCK PERHAPS, GHASTLY LIGHTS WOULD FLASH ON, VOICES WOULD SHOUT, MUSIC WOULD GO OUT OVER THE LAKE. BUT NOW, THERE WAS ONLY A BLIND HUNCHBACK SITTING ON A BLACK BOX...

THE BLACK FERRIS WHEEL ROSE LIKE AN IMMENSE LIGHT-BULBED CONSTELLATION AGAINST THE CLOUDY SKY, SILENT...

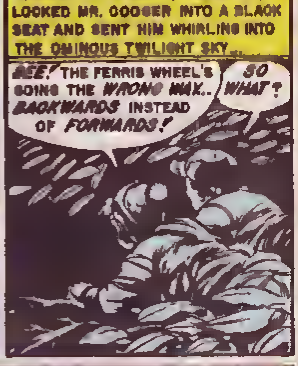


PETE LET HIMSELF BE LED TO THE HIGH GREEN HIDING PLACE OF A TREE. SUDDENLY HANK STIFFENED...

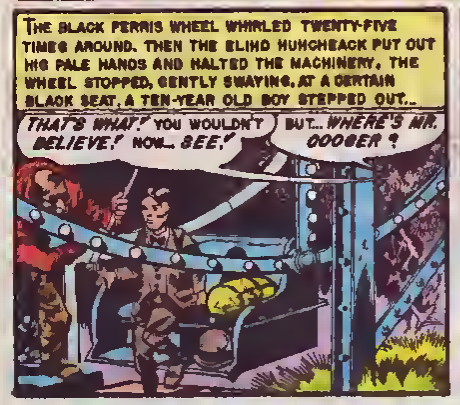


MR. COOGER, A MAN OF SOME THIRTY-FIVE YEARS, DRESSED IN SHARP BRIGHT CLOTHES, A LAPEL CARNATION, AND A BROWN DERBY HAT ON HIS HEAD, DRIFTED UNDER THE TREE...

MR. COOGER NODDED AT THE BLIND HUNCHBACK, SPOKE A WORD. THE HUNCHBACK BLINDLY, FUMBLING, LOCKED MR. COOGER INTO A BLACK SEAT AND SENT HIM WHIRLING INTO THE OMINOUS TWILIGHT SKY...



THE BLACK FERRIS WHEEL WHIRLED TWENTY-FIVE TIMES AROUND. THEN THE BLIND HUNCHBACK PUT OUT HIS PALE HANDS AND HALTED THE MACHINERY. THE WHEEL STOPPED, GENTLY SWAYING. AT A CERTAIN BLACK SEAT, A TEN-YEAR OLD BOY STEPPED OUT...



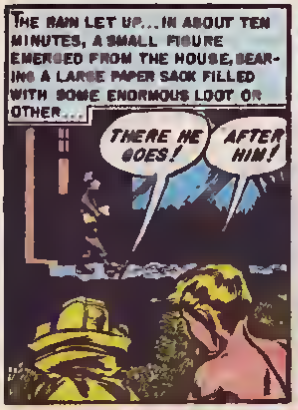
THE TEN YEAR OLD BOY WALKED OFF ACROSS THE WHISPERING CARNIVAL GROUNDS, INTO THE SHADOWS. PETER SEARCHED THE FERRIS WHEEL WITH HIS EYES FOR MR. COOGER...

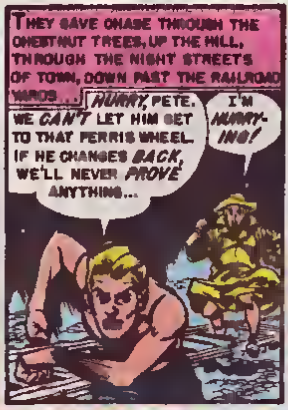
HANK DROPPED FROM THE TREE AND WAS SPRINTING BEFORE HE HIT THE GROUND...

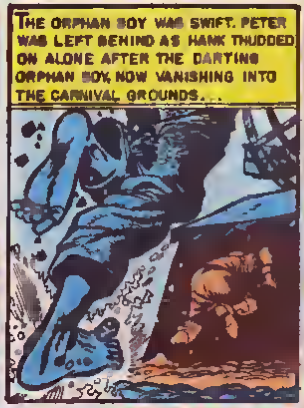
THE LIGHTS WERE BURNING IN MRS. FOLEY'S WHITE MANSION. PIANO MUSIC TINKLED. WITHIN THE WARM WINDOWS, PEOPLE MOVED. OUTSIDE, IT BEGAN TO RAIN, DESPONDENTLY, IRREVOCABLY, FOREVER AND EVER...
I'M SO WET LIKE SOMEONE SQUIRTED ME WITH A HOSE. HOW MUCH LONGER DO WE WAIT, HANK?
I KNOW HIS NAME. MY MOTHER TOLD ME ABOUT HIM THE OTHER DAY.
THEY HAD FOLLOWED THE TEN YEAR OLD FROM THE FERRIS WHEEL UP THROUGH TOWN, DOWN DARK STREETS TO MRS. FOLEY'S HOUSE. NOW, INSIDE THE WARM DINING ROOM, THE STRANGE LITTLE BOY SAT AT DINNER...
MOM SAID, 'HANK, YOU HEAR ABOUT THE LI'L ORPHAN BOY MOVED IN MRS. FOLEY'S? WELL, HIS NAME'S JOSEPH PIKES AND HE JUST CAME TO MRS. FOLEY'S ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO AND ASKED FOR SOMETHING TO EAT, AND HIM AND MRS. FOLEY BEEN GETTIN' ON LIKE HOT APPLE PIE EVER SINCE!' THAT'S WHAT MOM SAID.
I'M SCARED, HANK. I'M COLD AND HUNGRY AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS'S ALL ABOUT.
GOSH, YOU'RE DUMB, PETE! DON'T YOU SEE? THREE WEEKS AGO THE CARNIVAL CAME, AND ABOUT THE SAME TIME THIS LITTLE OLE ORPHAN KID SHOWS UP AT MRS. FOLEYS. AND MRS. FOLEY'S OWN SON DIED A LONG TIME AGO, AND SHE'S NEVER BEEN THE SAME. SO HERE'S THIS LITTLE OLE ORPHAN WHO BUTTERS HER ALL AROUND...
OH!
THEY MARCHED UP TO THE FRONT DOOR AND BANGED THE HUGE KNOCKER. AFTER AWHILE THE DOOR OPENED...
YOU'RE ALL WET! COME IN! MY LAND! WHAT DO YOU WANT? YOU'RE HENRY WALTERSON, AREN'T YOU?
UH-HUH! CAN WE SEE YOU ALONE, MA'AM?
HANK GLANCED FEARFULLY AT THE DINING ROOM WHERE THE STRANGE LITTLE BOY LOOKED UP FROM HIS EATING. HANK CREPT OVER AND SHUT THE HALL DOOR AND WHISPERED...
WE GOT TO WARN YOU. IT'S ABOUT THAT BOY COME TO LIVE WITH YOU... THAT ORPHAN!
WELL?
THE HALL GREW SUDDENLY COLD. MRS. FOLEY DREW HERSELF HIGH AND STIFF.
HE'S FROM THE CARNIVAL AND HE AIN'T NO BOY, HE'S A MAN, AND HE'S PLANNING ON LIVING HERE WITH YOU UNTIL HE FINDS WHERE YOUR MONEY IS AND THEN RUN OFF WITH IT SOME NIGHT, AND PEOPLE WILL LOOK FOR HIM BUT BECAUSE THEY'LL BE LOOKING FOR A TEN YEAR OLD, MR. COOGER WILL GET AWAY...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
THE CARNIVAL... AND THE FERRIS WHEEL GOING BACKWARD MAKING MR. COOGER YOUNGER, I DON'T KNOW HOW, AND HIM COMING HERE AS A BOY, AND YOU CAN'T TRUST HIM, BECAUSE WHEN HE HAS YOUR MONEY HE'LL GET BACK ON THE FERRIS WHEEL AND IT'LL GO FORWARD AND..
GET OUT, HENRY WALTERSON! GET OUT AND DON'T EVER COME BACK!
3

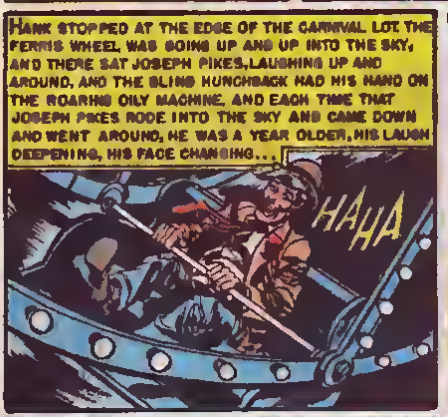
THE DOOR SLAMMED, PETER AND HANK FOUND THEMSELVES IN THE RAIN ONCE MORE. IT SOAKED INTO THEM, COLD AND COMPLETE...
SMART BUY! NOW YOU FIXED IT. SUPPOSE HE HEARD US, SUPPOSE HE COMES AND KILLS US IN OUR BEDS TONIGHT, TO SHUT US UP FOR KEEPS!
HE... HE WOULDN'T DO THAT.
PETER SEIZED HANK'S ARM AND POINTED...
WOULDN'T HE? LOOK!
IN THE BIG BAY WINDOW OF THE DINING ROOM NOW THE MESH CURTAIN PULLED ASIDE, STANDING THERE IN THE PINK LIGHT, HIS HAND MADE INTO A MENACING FIST, WAS THE ORPHAN BOY. HIS FACE WAS HORRIBLE TO SEE, THE TEETH BARED, THE EYES HATEFUL...
DURING SUPPER, FATHER LOOKED AT HANK AND SAID...
IF YOU DON'T CATCH PNEUMONIA, I'LL BE SURPRISED. SOAKED, YOU WERE, BY GOD! WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT THE CARNIVAL?
DO YOU KNOW MR. COOGER, THE CARNIVAL MAN, DAD?
THE ONE WITH THE PINK CARNATION IN HIS LAPEL? SURE, HE STAYS DOWN AT MRS. O'LEARY'S BOARDING HOUSE, GOT A ROOM IN THE BACK. WHY?
NOTHING JUST WAS WONDERING IF YOU KREW HIM.
AFTER SUPPER, HANK PUT IN A CALL TO PETER. AT THE OTHER END OF THE LINE, PETER SOUNDED MISERABLE WITH DOUSHING...
LISTEN, PETE! I SEE IT ALL NOW. WHEN THAT LI'L OLE ORPHAN BOY, JOSEPH PIKES, GETS MRS. FOLEY'S MOREY, HE'S GOT A GOOD PLAN.
WHAT?
HE'LL STICK AROUND TOWN AS THE CARNIVAL MAN, LIVING IN A NOOK AT MRS. O'LEARY'S. THAT WAY, NOBODY'LL SET SUSPICIOUS OF HIM. EVERYBODY'LL BE LOOKING FOR THAT NASTY LITTLE BOY AND HE'LL BE GONE, AND MR. COOGER WILL BE WALKING AROUND, AND NOBODY'LL SUSPECT THE CARNIVAL AT ALL. IT WOULD LOOK FUNNY IF THE CARNIVAL SUDDENLY PULLED UP STAKES SO WE GOT TO ACT FAST.
NOBODY WILL BELIEVE US, HANK. I TRIED TO TELL MY FOLKS, BUT THEY SAID HOGWASH!

WE GOT TO ACT TONIGHT! BECAUSE IF WE DON'T, HE'LL KILL US! WE'RE THE ONLY ONES WHO KNOW! I SET HE JUST TRIES SOMETHING TONIGHT. SO, I TELL YOU, MEET ME AT MRS. FOLEY'S IN HALF AN HOUR.
AW!
YOU WANNA DIE?
N-NO!
WELL THEN, MEET ME THERE AND I BET WE SEE THAT ORPHAN BOY SNEAKING OUT WITH THE MONEY, TONIGHT, AND RUNNING BACK DOWN TO THE CARNIVAL GROUNDS WITH IT, WHEN MRS. FOLEY'S ASLEEP. I'LL SEE YOU THERE. SO LONG, PETE!
HARK HUNG UP HIS FATHER STOOD BEHIND HIM...
YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE, YOUNG MAN. YOU'RE GOING STRAIGHT TO BED. C'MON! UPSTAIRS!
SUT, POP! AW.. GEE...
HARK WAS MARCHED UPSTAIRS. HARK UNDRESSED. HIS FATHER TOOK HIS CLOTHES AND LOCKED HIM IN HIS ROOM. THE REST OF HANK'S WARDROBE HUNG OUTSIDE THE LOCKED BEDROOM DOOR IN THE HALL CLOSET...
NOW, GO TO BED!
HOLY COW!
PETER STOOD OUTSIDE MRS FOLEY'S HOUSE, LOST IN A VAST RAINCOAT AND MARINER'S CAP, SHIVERING. FINALLY THERE WAS A RUSTLING IN THE WET BUSHES
PSST! PETE! HEY! LEND ME YOUR PANTS! DAD WOULDN'T LET ME OUT!
GOSH, HANK! YOU'RE... YOU'RE NAKED!
C'MON! YOU'VE GOT THAT RAINCOAT OR. NOBODY'LL KNOW SO LEND ME YOUR PANTS, BEFORE I GET PNEUMONIA!
WELL... ALL RIGHT!
THE RELUCTANT TRANSACTION WAS MADE. HANK PULLED THE PANTS OR. THEY WAITED...
6


THE RAIN LET UP... IN ABOUT TEN MINUTES, A SMALL FIGURE EMERGED FROM THE HOUSE, BEARING A LARGE PAPER SACK FILLED WITH SOME ENORMOUS LOOT OR OTHER...
THERE HE GOES!
AFTER HIM!

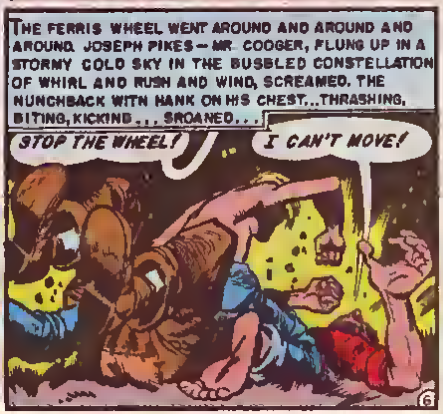

THEY GAVE CHASE THROUGH THE CHESTNUT TREES, UP THE HILL, THROUGH THE NIGHT STREETS OF TOWN, DOWN PAST THE RAILROAD YARDS...
HURRY, PETE. WE CAN'T LET HIM GET TO THAT FERRIS WHEEL. IF HE CHANGES BACK, WE'LL NEVER PROVE ANYTHING...
I'M HURRYING!


THE ORPHAN BOY WAS SWIFT. PETER WAS LEFT BEHIND AS HANK THUDDED ON ALONE AFTER THE DARTING ORPHAN BOY, NOW VANISHING INTO THE CARNIVAL GROUNDS...

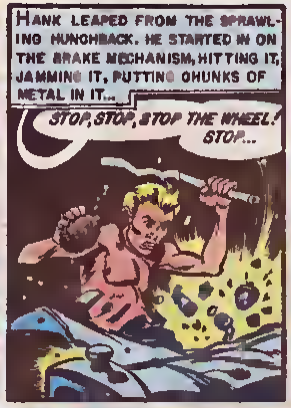

HANK STOPPED AT THE EDGE OF THE CARNIVAL LOT. THE FERRIS WHEEL WAS GOING UP AND UP INTO THE SKY, AND THERE SAT JOSEPH PIKES, LAUGHING UP AND AROUND, AND THE BLIND HUNCHBACK HAD HIS HAND ON THE ROARING OILY MACHINE, AND EACH TIME THAT JOSEPH PIKES RODE INTO THE SKY AND CAME DOWN AND WENT AROUND, HE WAS A YEAR OLDER, HIS LAUGH DEEPENING, HIS FACE CHANGING...
HAHA

HANK RAN FORWARD AT THE BLIND HUNCHBACK BY THE MACHINE. ON THE WAY, HE PICKED UP A TENT SPIKE...
WHO'S HERE? WHO...
OOOOOOF!

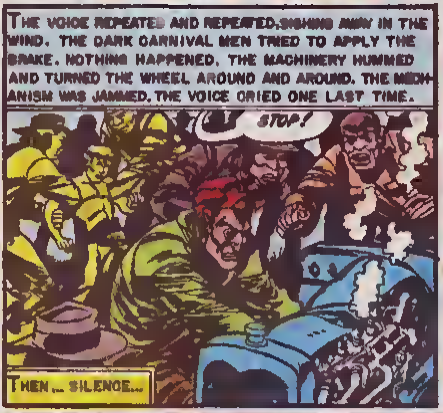
THE HUNCHSACK TRIED TO REACH THE BRAKE TO STOP THE FERRIS WHEEL. HANK RAN IN AND SLAMMED THE SPIKE AGAINST HIS FINGERS, MASHING THEM...
YAAAAAAAHHHH!


THE FERRIS WHEEL WENT AROUND AND AROUND AND AROUND. JOSEPH PIKES — MR. COOGER, FLUNG UP IN A STORMY COLD SKY IN THE BUBBLED CONSTELLATION OF WHIRL AND RUSH AND WIND, SCREAMED. THE HUNCHBACK WITH HANK ON HIS CHEST... THRASHING, BITING, KICKING... GROANED...
STOP THE WHEEL!
I CAN'T MOVE!

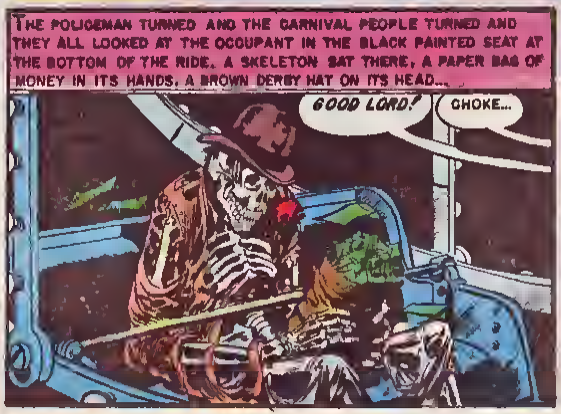
MR. GOGGER, A MAN, A DIFFERENT MAN AND VOICE THIS TIME, CRIED OUT, COMING AROUND IN PANIC, GOING UP INTO THE ROARING HISSING SKY OF THE FERRIS WHEEL. THE WIND BLEW THROUGH THE HIGH DARK WHEEL SPOKES...
STOP! OH, PLEASE STOP THE WHEEL!

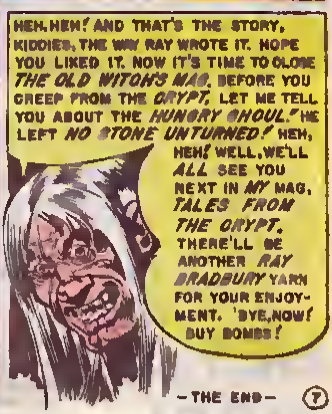

HANK LEAPED FROM THE SPRAWLING HUNCHBACK. HE STARTED IN ON THE BRAKE MECHANISM, HITTING IT, JAMMING IT, PUTTING CHUNKS OF METAL IN IT...
STOP, STOP, STOP THE WHEEL! STOP...

THE VOICE FADED. NOW THE CARNIVAL WAS ABLAZE WITH SUDDEN LIGHT. MEN SPRANG FROM TENTS, CAME RUNNING. HANK FELT HIMSELF JERKED INTO THE AIR WITH OATHS AND BEATINGS RAINED ON HIM. A POLICEMAN APPEARED, PISTOL DRAWN...
STOP! STOP THE WHEEL!


THE VOICE REPEATED AND REPEATED, SIGHING AWAY IN THE WIND. THE DARK CARNIVAL MEN TRIED TO APPLY THE BRAKE. NOTHING HAPPENED. THE MACHINERY HUMMED AND TURNED THE WHEEL AROUND AND AROUND. THE MECHANISM WAS JAMMED. THE VOICE CRIED ONE LAST TIME.
STOP!
THEN... SILENCE...

WITHOUT A WORD THE FERRIS WHEEL FLEW IN A CIRCLE, A HIGH SYSTEM OF ELECTRIC STARS AND METAL AND SEATS. THERE WAS NO SOUND NOW BUT THE SOUND OF THE MOTOR WHICH DIED AND STOPPED. THE FERRIS WHEEL COASTED A MINUTE, THEN CAME TO REST, ALL THE PEOPLE GAZING UP AT IT...
LOOK!


THE POLICEMAN TURNED AND THE CARNIVAL PEOPLE TURNED AND THEY ALL LOOKED AT THE OCCUPANT IN THE BLACK PAINTED SEAT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE RIDE. A SKELETON SAT THERE, A PAPER BAG OF MONEY IN ITS HANDS, A BROWN DERBY HAT ON ITS HEAD...
GOOD LORD!
CHOKE...


HEH, HEH! AND THAT'S THE STORY, KIDDIES, THE WAY RAY WROTE IT. HOPE YOU LIKED IT. NOW IT'S TIME TO CLOSE *THE OLD WITCH'S MAG*. BEFORE YOU CREEP FROM THE *CRYPT*, LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT THE *HUNGRY GHOUL*. HE LEFT *NO STONE UNTURNED*! HEH, HEH! WELL, WE'LL *ALL* SEE YOU NEXT IN *MY* MAG, *TALES FROM THE CRYPT*. THERE'LL BE ANOTHER *RAY BRADBURY* YARN FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT. 'BYE, NOW! BUY BONDS!
—THE END—

The
Old Witch